

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 RIO DE 02875 271717Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOTE-00 FMC-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 CG-00 DLOS-09

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FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6400

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIO DE JANEIRO 2875

FROM AMB. SAYRE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EWWR, BR

SUBJECT: SEALAND CONTAINER PROBLEM

1. MR. ABUD, THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SUNAMAM, ENGAGED ME IN CONVERSATION AT CONSUL GENERAL'S HOUSE. HE SAID THAT WE (MEANING U.S. AND BRAZIL) HAVE A LITTLE SHIPPING PROBLEM. I AGREED THAT WE DID BUT HOPED AS HE DID THAT WE COULD WORK IT OUT. SEALAND IS WELCOME IN BRAZIL, HE SAID, BUT ITS THIRTY-FIVE FOOT CONTAINERS ARE NOT. IF WE SET A PRECEDENT WITH THEM WE WILL HAVE NOTHING BUT TROUBLE. HE SAID SEALAND WOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE IF IT WANTED TO USE FORTY-FOOT CONTAINERS. I SAID I ASSUMED SEALAND HAD AN INVESTMENT IN THIRTY-FIVE FOOT ONES AND WOULD HAVE UNDERSTANDABLE DIFFICULTY IN COMPLYING WITH THE BRAZILIAN REGULATIONS. HE REPLIED NEGATIVELY. HE SAID SEALAND HAD AT LEAST SIX SHIPS THAT COULD HANDLE FORTY-FOOT ONES AND IF IT WANTED TO USE FORTY-FOOT ONES IT COULD WITHOUT ANY REAL PROBLEM.

2. MR. ABUD SAID THAT RELATIONS WITH MOORE-MCCORMICK, PRU-DENTIAL AND DELTA WERE EXCELLENT. BUT SEALAND DID NOT SEEM CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 RIO DE 02875 271717Z

TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS DEALING WITH A SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT AND IT IS TRYING TO THROW ITS WEIGHT AROUND. HE SAID HE WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY HELPING THINGS CALM AND THE ACTIONS OF THE USG HAD NOT HELPED BUT HE THOUGHT IT COULD BE WORKED OUT IF SEALAND WANTED TO COOPERATE.

3. COMMENT: THE ABOVE CONVERSATION OCCURRED AT A RECEPTION

AT CONSUL GENERAL'S HOME TO INTRODUCE ME TO SOME LEADING BRAZILIAN PERSONALITIES. THE SITUATION WAS NOT APPROPRIATE TO REVIEW POINTS MADE IN BRASILIA TO GOB OFFICIALS. I HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY MET ABUD BUT HE SEEMED DURING RECEPTION TO SEEK ME OUT TO GIVE ME A MESSAGE. I DO NOT KNOW SEALAND REPRESENTATIVES AND WHETHER ABUD'S COMMENTS ARE FAIR REPRESENTATION OF HOW THEY HAVE CONDUCTED THEMSELVES HERE. ABUD'S MESSAGE WAS THAT THE BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT WAS NOT ABOUT TO BE PUSHED AROUND BY AN AMERICAN SHIPPING COMPANY. BUT IF THE SHIPPING COMPANY WERE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THAT BRAZIL IS A SOVEREIGN NATION THAT HAS A RIGHT TO ESTABLISH REASONABLE REGULATIONS THEN THERE WOULD BE A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION AND COOPERATION.

4. WE HAVE SEEN THIS SAME BRAZILIAN ATTITUDE ON THE NUCLEAR AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. IN MY INITIAL MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER HE HAS GONE OUT OF HIS WAY TO EXPRESS HIMSELF ON USG "TRYING TO LEGISLATE FOR THE WORLD". I AM SURE PROBLEM IS MORE COMPLICATED THAN ABUD STATES, BUT BRAZILIAN OFFICIALS SEEM TO HAVE THEIR BACK UP ON THIS PARTLY FOR REASONS UNRELATED TO ISSUE.

DEXTER

CONFIDENTIAL

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